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Louisiana Ethics Administration Program
P.O. Box 4368
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To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Jodey Bruno. I am a teacher at St. Amant High School as well as the dance team coach of the St. Amant High School Gatoettes. I took this position in March of 2018. In addition, in June of 2019, I purchased an existing dance studio, The Danse Difference, from the current owner who had run the business for 40 plus years.

It has been brought to my attention recently that there may be a possible conflict of interest with me being a studio owner and the high school dance team coach. It has been suggested that girls who attend my dance studio have an advantage, and those who do not are at a disadvantage when it comes to making the team. This letter is to explain my programs in hopes for some advice moving forward. I can only assume that this has come to light because tryouts for the upcoming season are looming.

A little background about my school program - tryouts are held in March or April of the year preceding the next school year. An outside team of judges is hired from various dance organizations outside of the area. In addition, my administrator sits in on the process. Judges use an excel document to enter scores. At the end of the process, the judges give me a list of candidates that are to be chosen, at which time, I post this list for the new team to know. I am not a part of the judging process at all. I simply sit in, away from the judges, to observe. We dance for football games and compete locally and nationally.

When Covid hit in 2020, practice at school became very hard, as the area we normally practice in, the school cafeteria, had to be roped off into socially distanced areas. In addition to over 17 sports teams on campus, we were vying for space with three cheer teams and a flag team. With permission of my administrator, I moved practices to my dance studio. We continued the COVID procedures of taking temperatures and socially distancing at practice.

My current school team consists of 29 dancers. Most of these dancers take dance lessons in some capacity at one of the many studios in our parish. The 29 dancers on my current team represent students from six local studios, mine included. I have 125 students in my studio currently. Of these 125, six of them are members of my current team. Of the six

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members of my team who are also students at my studio, two of them have been members since childhood, long before my purchase of the studio. Three of the six joined the studio after making the school team in 2020. One was a member before tryouts, but only for a year.

In addition, there are two dancers who have danced at my studio for two years who did NOT make the team in 2019 and 2020. We are one of the only studios in town who offer technique classes that are not connected to dancing in an end of year recital. For this reason, our technique classes have students from four high schools and five middle schools, some of which take dance classes at other dance studios as well. Many local high school and middle school students are using these classes to get ready for their respective school dance team tryouts. My current enrollment in this class is 31 students. Of these 31, only six are students from St. Amant High School.

On March 6, 2021, my studio held a pre-tryout clinic at which the captain of my school team was the teacher. However, she also works for me as a teacher at the dance studio and has since August of 2020. This clinic was open to all schools, middle and high school, in the area. This is a common practice at the studios around our area, and other members of our school team have been the teachers at these events at other studios.

The charge for our event was \$45.00. This covered the teachers' salaries as well as the overhead to run the studio during that time. There were 17 students in attendance. Of these 17 students, 7 are eligible to audition for my school team, with upcoming auditions to be held in April of 2021. This event was publicized on my studio Facebook only. Anyone from any dance school was allowed to attend. I had five students attend who are not current studio students, representing several other local studios. The other twelve students are current studio students. Students attend these weekend events to get some extra practice before their auditions. After paying my overhead cost and teachers, I profited roughly \$350.00.

I do not feel like there is a conflict of interest between my dance studio and my school team. I do not teach classes at my dance studio; I am the owner and overseer of business. I have a faculty of twelve who teach all classes. For most of the students, I may never see them dance until our end of the season show. I am asking for advice in moving forward. It is a common practice to employ local dance team students and I have every intention to keep the two students who currently work for me. Both of these girls are graduating in May 2021. It is possible that there may be a need to hold practices at my studio in the years coming for my school team due to lack of space. Please advise according to the ethical guidelines of Louisiana.

Sincerely,

Jodey Bruno

Owner, The Danse Difference, LLC.

English I teacher and Gatorette Coach - St. Amant High School

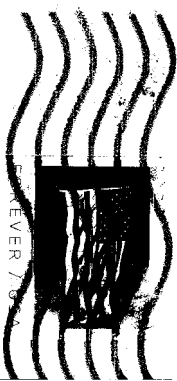
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